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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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HIGH SEAS FISHING FOR ALASKAN SALMON PROHIBITED

In order to conserve the salmon runs of Alaska, fishing for salmon, except by trolling, on the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean and the Bering Sea adjacent to Alaskan waters by any "person or fishing vessel subject to the jurisdiction of the United States," is prohibited by an order effective July 18, 1956, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton announced today.

This action is taken under authority of the North Pacific Fisheries Act of August 12, 1954. It is intended to prevent development of an American high seas salmon fishery which would intercept the Alaskan salmon runs before they reach waters now under regulation. It has been demonstrated that salmon can be taken in commercial quantities on the high seas to such an extent that protective measures imposed within Alaskan waters could be nullified. This made the new prohibition necessary.

The United States section of the International North Pacific Fisheries Commission (established by convention between the United States, Canada, and Japan for the conservation of the fisheries resources of the north Pacific Ocean) requested that this restrictive action be taken. It also has the endorsement of the canning operators and fishermen of Alaska.

The restriction applies only to waters adjacent to the waters of Alaska. The term "waters of Alaska" north and west of the international boundary at Dixon Entrance is defined as including those extending three miles seaward (1) from the coast, (2) from lines extending from headland to headland across all bays, inlets, straits, passes, sounds and entrances, and (3) from any island or groups of islands, including the islands of the Alexander Archipelago, and the waters between such groups of islands and the mainland.

The North Pacific Area, where fishing will be prohibited, is defined to include all waters of the north Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea north of Dixon Entrance and east of 175 degrees west longitude, exclusive of the "waters of Alaska." This is the "abstention line" east of which the Japanese have agreed to abstain from fishing for salmon, herring, and halibut, as provided for in the convention. Attention is called to the fact that this prohibition does not extend westward of the "abstention line."

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